

Koenings' Reeded Edge Half Newsletter #64

December 15, 2024

Dear Reeded Edge Half Collector:

Major Reeded Edge Half Collection to be Sold in January 14-19, 2025

Heritage Auctions will be selling the John D. Torres collection of Reeded Edge Half Dollars in January 14-19, 2025. Although John has only 44 specimens, they are composed of mostly condition census specimens (in the Top 5) with an average grade of MS60.

I personally have the most complete set with 56 die marriages including the newly discovered 1837 GR-27 and 4 other very special die varieties but only have an AU53 average grade and do not have a Classic Rarity 1838-O GR-1.

Dr. Charles Link, Jr. since August 2016, has had the Number 1 collection shown in the PCGS Registry with 56 die marriages, including the Classic Rarity 1838-O GR-1, with an average grade of MS60.

2024

On June 2, 2024, I discovered the 2nd known 1839-O GR-3 in NGC VG10 and reported it in my Newsletter #62 on June 15, 2024.

My 3rd Census for Reeded Edge Half Dollars was published in the July issue of the J R Journal in July 2024 and in the E-Golbrecht, Monthly in June 2024.

In my Newsletter #63, dated October 15, 2024, I reported the first real “New Die Marriage” since Dick Graham printed his book “A Registry of Die Varieties of Reeded Edge Half Dollars, 1836-1839” in June 2012. There are now 3 known specimens of 1837 GR-27.

Main Topics for This Newsletter

Below are the Main Topics I plan to cover in this Newsletter:

1. Update on “New” 1837 GR-27
2. Attributing 1837 die marriages by measuring their diameters.

3. New Rarity Ratings for 56 die marriages plus 5 additional die varieties.
4. The Ultimate Goal is to provide a Price List for “Reeded Edge Half Dollars”

1. Update on “New” 1837 GR-27 Die Marriage

On October 17, 2024, Alan Bricker sent an email as follows:

“----Difficult to tell from the pictures I sent, the right top of the “7” in the date shows fine re-punching. This is a diagnostic feature independent of the die crack(s).”

Below is a photo of Alan’s specimen date:



Photo of Alan Bricker’s 1837 GR-27 Date

On the following page, I have shown photos of my 1837 GR-27 Date and Jonathan Osborne’s 1837 GR-27 Date using the upper right corner of the 7 as the matching point. I can see no obvious “fine re-punching”. The distance between the top of 3 and the top of 7 does seem to match on all 3 specimens. In all 3 cases, the 7 is slightly higher than the 3.



Photo of Jim Koenings' 1837 GR-27 Date



Photo of Jonathan Osborne's 1837 GR-27 Date

An article on 1837 GR-27 is scheduled to be published in the December 2024 issue of the J R Journal. Steve Herrman was able to lighten up Jonathan Osborne's specimen that appeared very dark in the Heritage Auction, Lot 645, that sold on April 28, 2002.

There were no additional specimens reported after sending Newsletter #63 on October 15, 2024.

2. Attributing 1837 Die Marriages by Measuring Diameters

When Dick Graham wrote his 2012 book, he abandoned Jules Reivers JR numbering system and coin order and established a “New System” GR numbers based on die marriage diameters. For the year 1837, the diameters were so different that the numbers fell into 4 groups as shown below:

1837 Group Diameters			
Group 1		Group 2	
Die Marriage	Diameter	Die Marriage	Diameter
1837 GR-1	1.204”	1837 GR- 9	1.197”
1837 GR-2	1.204”	1837 GR-10	1.194”
1837 GR-3	1.205”	1837 GR-11	1.194”
1837 GR-4	1.204”	1837 GR-12	1.187”
1837 GR-5	1.206”	1837 GR-13	1.189”
1837 GR-6	1.203”	1837 GR-14	1.189”
1837 GR-7	1.204”	1837 GR-15	1.191”
1837 GR-8	1.202”	1837 GR-16	1.186”
		1837 GR-27	1.187”
Group 3		Group 4	
Die Marriage	Diameter	Die Marriage	Diameter
1837 GR-17	1.210”		
1837 GR-18	1.214”		
1837 GR-19	1.215”		
1837 GR-20	1.217”		
1837 GR-21	1.215”		
1837 GR-22	1.214”		
1837 GR-23	1.219”		
1837 GR-24 sm.	1.217”	1837 GR-24 lg.	1.245”
		1837 GR-25	1.245”

Having 26 die marriages, 1837 is a difficult year for most collectors to attribute only because it has the largest number of die marriages. However, if you can measure the diameter, it will determine which group it is in. For Group 1, die marriages GR-2 to GR-5, all have the same obverse but with a different reverse. Measurements are not much help for 1838 to 1839.

The above measurements are very accurate, so accurate that when I measured my coins, almost all of them were within .001” of Dick Graham’s measurements. The biggest exception was an 1837 GR-25 (R-6) in Prime Stage that I measured to be 1.232”. 1837 GR-27 is a newly

discovered die marriage, and it is the only 1837 die marriage that can not be viewed in StacksandBowers Archives.

4

3. New Rarity Ratings for Reeded Edge Half Dollars – 1836 to 1839

Of the 4 Major Coin Auction firms, StacksandBowers Archives (StacksB) has the most reliable records of Reeded Edge Half Dollar die marriages. Of the 61 die marriages listed below, StacksB does not have photos or records of the 1st six ranked die marriages since none have been sold by StacksB. The numbers you see under “StacksB Records” are the actual numbers researchers will find are listed for those Ranked 7 through 61, for attributed die marriages. Meanwhile “My Records of Sales” now include all **attributed** Die Marriages listed in StacksB and Heritage Auction Archives, GreatCollection Auction Archives, Goldberg Archives and eBay for die marriages that are rated R-3 and rarer since I started recording in November 2009. “My Records of Sales” may also include any unattributed die marriages sold, that I attributed.

Rank	Die Marriage	StacksB Records	My Records of Sales	Rank	Die Marriage	StacksB Records	My Records of Sales
1	1839-O GR-3	-	2	31	1837 GR-24, Normal	8	21
2	1839-O GR-2	-	3	32	1837 GR-14	8	24
3	1837 GR-27	-	3	33	1837 GR-7	8	25
4	1839 GR-8, Grt Rot	-	8 different	34	1837 GR-3	9	21
5	1839 GR-8, LDS	-	7 total	35	1839 GR-4	9	28
6	1839-O GR-4, Normal	-	25	36	1838 GR-12	9	30
7	1837 GR-25	1	14	37	1838 GR-8	9	39
8	1839 GR-3	1	32	38	1838 GR-14	10	32
9	1837 GR-24, Brd Stk	1	5	39	1837 GR-8	10	36
10	1839 GR-1	2	11	40	1838 GR-9	10	40
11	1838 GR-5	2	22	41	1837 GR-22	11	28
12	1839 GR-2	2	23	42	1838 GR-2	11	33
13	1838 GR-16	2	27	43	1837 GR-20	12	31
14	1837 GR-10	3	19	44	1838 GR-11	12	45
15	1837 GR-16	3	20	45	1837 GR-18	13	30
16	1838 GR-1	4	23	46	1838 GR-6	13	36
17	1838-O GR-1	5	9	47	1837 GR-12	14	30
18	1837 GR-2	5	21	48	1838 GR-4	14	37
19	1839 GR-6	5	29	49	1837 GR-5	14	38
20	1839 GR-8, Normal	5	36	50	1837 GR-23	14	41
21	1838 GR-7	5	40	51	1838 GR-10	14	41
22	1837 GR-11	5	45	52	1837 GR-9	15	25
23	1837 GR-4	6	15	53	1837 GR-13	19	36
24	1837 GR-19	7	18	54	1838 GR-15	21	57
25	1837 GR-6	7	22	55	1837 GR-17	23	51
26	1839-O GR-4, Medalic	7	26	56	1838 GR-3	27	51
27	1837 GR-1	7	30	57	1838 GR-13	27	56
28	1837 GR-21	7	31	58	1839 GR-7	29	69
29	1839-O GR-5	7	41	59	1839 GR-5	39	75

30	1837	GR-15	8	20	60	1839-O GR-1	55	127
					61	1836 GR-1	60	223

5

3. New Rarity Ratings for Reeded Edge Half Dollars – 1836 to 1839 (cont.)

My “Records of Sales” (page 5) plus portions from my “2024 Census” and the number of “Koenings’ Specimens” will give you the most accurate “Total Number Known” on Pages 6 & 7. This “New Rarity Ratings List” replaces the one listed 12-15-22 in Newsletter #44.

Rank Today	Die Marriage	Records of Sales + 2024 Census	Koenings’ Specimens	Total Number Known	Rarity 2012	New Rarity
-						
1	1839-O GR-3	1	1	2	R-7	R-8
2	1839-O GR-2	1	2	3	R-7	R-8
3	1837 GR-27	New	1	3	New	R-7
4	1839 GR-8, Grtly Rot’d	3	5	8	New	R-7
5	1839 GR-8, LDS	5	2	7	New	R-5
6	1837 GR-24, Brd Struck	6	1	7	New	R-6
7	1838-O GR-1	9	0	9	R-7	R-7
8	1839 GR-1	10	1	11	R-7	R-7
9	1837 GR-25	16	5	21	R-5+	R-6
10	1838 GR-5	15	7	22	R-8	R-6
11	1837 GR-10	24	7	31	R-4	R-4+
12	1837 GR-4	26	7	33	R-3	R-4+
13	1837 GR-24, Normal	27	6	33	R-2	R-3
14	1837 GR-19	26	8	34	R-3	R-3+
15	1837 GR-20	28	6	34	R-3	R-4
16	1837 GR-1	31	5	36	R-5	R-5
17	1839-O GR-4, Normal	34	2	36	R-4	R-4+
18	1838 GR-16	30	6	36	R-4	R-5
19	1837 GR-3	28	8	36	R-2	R-3
20	1837 GR-15	30	6	36	R-3	R-3
21	1837 GR-16	31	6	37	R-4	R-4
22	1839-O GR-4, Medallic	35	2	37	R-4	R-4+
23	1837 GR-6	32	8	40	R-3	R-4
24	1839 GR-2	32	9	41	R-5+	R-5+
25	1837 GR-12	39	2	41	R-2	R-3
26	1839-O GR-5	41	1	42	R-4+	R-4
27	1839 GR-8, Normal	38	5	43	R-3	R-4
28	1837 GR-7	35	8	43	R-2	R-3
29	1839 GR-3	32	11	43	R-5+	R-4+
30	1837 GR-2	36	8	44	R-3	R-3

I believe the Top 30 die marriages are all worth a premium. I believe 1839 GR-8, Greatly Rotated, where all 8 known specimens have a different reverse rotation, is R-7, individually.

1837 GR-19 is rated R-3+ since the number of known specimens is very low and the diagnostics are not usually visible in grades below XF.

3. New Rarity Ratings for Reeded Edge Half Dollars – 1836 to 1839 (cont.)

Rank Today	Die Marriage		Records of Sales + 2024 Census	Koenings' Specimens	Total Number Known	Rarity 2012	New Rarity
31	1837	GR-5	35	8	43	R-1	R-1
32	1837	GR-21	38	6	44	R-2	R-3+
33	1837	GR-18	41	3	44	R-1	R-2
34	1839	GR-6	38	7	45	R-3	R-3+
35	1837	GR-9	41	4	45	R-1	R-2
36	1838	GR-1	41	5	46	R-3	R-3
37	1838	GR-2	43	4	47	R-3	R-3
38	1837	GR-13	42	5	47	R-1	R-2
39	1837	GR-14	41	7	48	R-1	R-2
40	1838	GR-12	42	6	48	R-4	R-3
41	1839	GR-4	42	6	48	R-1	R-2
42	1837	GR-22	41	7	48	R-2	R-2
43	1838	GR-7	45	7	52	R-4	R-3
44	1838	GR-8	49	4	53	R-2	R-2
45	1837	GR-8	48	6	54	R-4	R-3
46	1838	GR-14	46	8	54	R-3	R-2
47	1837	GR-23	51	6	57	R-2	R-2
48	1837	GR-4	54	4	58	R-1	R-1
49	1837	GR-11	52	9	61	R-5	R-3
50	1838	GR-10	51	10	61	R-3	R-3
51	1838	GR-6	49	14	63	R-3	R-3
52	1837	GR-17	62	3	65	R-1	R-1
53	1838	GR-3	62	3	65	R-2	R-1
54	1838	GR-11	58	9	67	R-1	R-1
55	1838	GR-9	61	8	69	R-3	R-1
56	1838	GR-13	70	4	74	R-1	R-1
57	1839	GR-5	60	15	75	R-2	R-1
58	1838	GR-15	67	10	77	R-3	R-1
59	1839	GR-7	84	4	88	R-1	R-1
60	1839-O	GR-1	155	2	157	R-1	R-1
61	1836	GR-1	239	2	241	R-2	R-2

Although 1836 GR-1 and 1839-O GR-1 have the lowest reported mintage among Reeded Edge Half Dollars, they are the most sought after for date sets.

You may notice that I have (14) 1838 GR-6 specimens and (15) 1839 GR-5 specimens. Since the 1838 GR-6 die marriage has the same obverse as 1838 GR-5, I have been studying the die

stages of both die marriages since 2014. As far as 1839 GR-5, I think some GR-5's may actually be GR-6's and when I have more time, I might figure that out (not a high priority at this time).

7

3. New Rarity Ratings for Reeded Edge Half Dollars – 1836 to 1839 (cont.)

Die Marriage	2024 Rarity	Die Marriage	2024 Rarity
1836 GR-1	R-2	1838 GR-5	R-6
		1838 GR-6	R-3
1837 GR-1	R-5	1838 GR-7	R-3
1837 GR-2	R-3	1838 GR-8	R-3
1837 GR-3	R-3	1838 GR-9	R-1
1837 GR-4	R-4+	1838 GR-10	R-3
1837 GR-5	R-1	1838 GR-11	R-1
1837 GR-6	R-4	1838 GR-12	R-3
1837 GR-7	R-3	1838 GR-13	R-1
1837 GR-8	R-3	1838 GR-14	R-2
1837 GR-9	R-2	1838 GR-15	R-1
1837 GR-10	R-4+	1838 GR-16	R-5
1837 GR-11	R-3		
1837 GR-12	R-3	1838-O GR-1	R-7
1837 GR-13	R-2		
1837 GR-14	R-2	1839 GR-1	R-7
1837 GR-15	R-3	1839 GR-2	R-5+
1837 GR-16	R-4	1839 GR-3	R-4+
1837 GR-17	R-1	1839 GR-4	R-2
1837 GR-18	R-2	1839 GR-5	R-1
1837 GR-19	R-3+	1839 GR-6	R-3+
1837 GR-20	R-4	1839 GR-7	R-1
1837 GR-21	R-3+	1839 GR-8, Greatly Rot'd	R-7
1837 GR-22	R-2	1839 GR-8, Normal	R-4
1837 GR-23	R-2	1839 GR-8, LDS	R-5
1837 GR-24, Broad Collar	R-6		
1837 GR-24, Normal	R-3		
1837 GR-25	R-6	1839-O GR-1	R-1
1837 GR-27	R-8	1839-O GR-2	R-8
		1839-O GR-3	R-8
1838 GR-1	R-3	1839-O GR-4, Normal	R-4+
1838 GR-2	R-3	1839-O GR-4, Medalllic	R-4+
1838 GR-3	R-1	1839-O GR-5	R-4
1838 GR-4	R-1		

The above list updates the Rarity Values previously updated for the first time in Newsletter #44, dated December 15, 2022. This time there are 61 Die Marriages listed, adding 1837 GR-27 (Newly Discovered) and 1839 GR-8, LDS and splitting 1837 GR-24 into 2 separate die varieties; 1837 GR-24 Broad Collar and 1837 GR-24, Normal.

4. Ultimate Goal is to Provide a Price List for Reeded Edge Half Dollars

Now that I have presented the New Rarity Values in this Newsletter #64 and Heritage Auctions will be selling the **John D. Torres Collection of Reeded Edge Half Dollars** in January 14-19, 2025, my next Newsletter #65 scheduled for February 15, 2025 will be the perfect time to attempt a price list for Reeded Edge Half Dollars. The last Major Sale of Reeded Edge Half Dollars was the Jules Reiver Collection sold 19 years ago by Heritage Auctions in January 26-28, 2006.

Collectors Comments

At this time, I would like to thank Ryan Baker for his continuous support. After attending the Missouri State Numismatic Show, on July 30, 2024, Ryan sent me the photo of his 1837 GR-25 that he found. Just shows that great coins can still be found, unattributed. Below is a photo of the obverse of his coin:



1837 GR-25 Found at the Missouri State Numismatic Show by Ryan Baker

9

Conclusions

When viewing the “New rarity Ratings for Reeded Edge Halves” on pages 6 and 7, you should realize that I do not actively record sales for most R-1 or R-2 die marriages on eBay. Those die marriages were mainly obtained from attributed sales from Major Coin Auction Firms and my 2024 Census.

If a 4th Census for Reeded Edge Halves is conducted, collectors will have to provide certified serial numbers to prevent any duplication between my “Records of Sales” and Census information reported.

While trying to complete my die stage collection, I did notice at least (3) R-2 die marriages that were more difficult to find than other R-2 die marriages. If you put off adding, to your collection, 1837 GR-3, 1837 GR-12 and 1837 GR-24 because they were only rated R-2, they may now be harder to find. My 2024 Census found the 1837 GR-24, Broad Collar die marriage

to be very difficult to find. When you subtract the Broad Collar reported from the Normal GR-24, they also have fewer known. As far as die marriages rated R-1 (over 1,000 known), 1837 GR-18 will be harder to find than most other R-1's.

If you acquired more than 3 specimens of 1837 GR-11 (R-5 in 2012) and 1838 GR-7 (R-4 in 2012), you may now find them harder to sell as I now rate them R-3 and abundantly available.

I personally enjoyed collecting 1838 GR-10 by die stage and have at least 6 or more different die Stages. Since 1837 GR-2, GR-3, GR-4 and GR-5 all use the same Obverse Die, by having an Early Die Stage, Middle Die Stage and Late Die Stage of each, I have over 12 different die stages of that Obverse, obviously my favorite. When you add Prime and CUDS there are even more. 1837 GR-4 (key) was originally rated R-3 by Dick Graham in 2012, I now rate it R-4+.

Having an extra month to spend on Newsletter #64 last month, allowed me to update all 61 of my "Records of Sales" and double check the diameters of all my 60+ Raw coins. In the process, I discovered 2 misattributed coins; one that I still can't attribute and a 2nd that I bought in February 2010 as an 1839-O GR-5 and now think it is an 1839-O GR-2 in Raw F details.

Next Newsletter #65 Scheduled for February 15, 2025

Now that I have established a New Set of Rarity Values for all 61 die marriages and Heritage Auctions will be selling the John D. Torres Collection of over 40 die marriages of Reeded Edge Halves (all over AU55) on January 14-19, 2025, I am hoping to develop a much-needed basic Price Guide for Reeded Edge Half Dollars in Newsletter #65.

Please send any comments or questions about Newsletter #64 to bustcoin1@verizon.net

Happy Hunting!